

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A biodegradable fibrous support for mulching of the soil, characterized in that it further contains biodegradable thermobonding fibres distributed in the mass of the said fibrous support.

2. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that the thermobonding fibres consist exclusively of polylactic fibres.

3. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that the thermobonding fibres represent between 5 to 50% by weight, advantageously between 10 to 15% by weight of the support.

4. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that it is provided with a grid, which is either maintained on the whole or part of the at least one face of the support, or incorporated into the whole or part of the mass of the support, said grid being produced of biodegradable polymers chosen from the group comprising polylactic acid, polycaprolactone, viscose, modified viscose, polyhydroxybutyrate and polyhydroxyalcanoate, by themselves or as a mixture.

5. (original) A support according to Claim 4, characterized in that the grid is made exclusively of modified viscose threads.

6. (original) A support according to Claim 4, characterized in that the weight of the grid is between 10 and 50 g/m², advantageously in the order of 20 g/m².

7. (original) A support according to Claim 4, characterized in that the grid is positioned exclusively in the area of the fixing points of the support on the ground.

8. (original) A support according to Claim 4, characterized in that the grid is glued directly on the surface of the fibrous support by means of a water-resistant

biodegradable glue chosen from the group comprising ethylene polyvinyl alcohol (EVOH) and polyvinyl alcohol (PVA), by themselves or as a mixture, the glue representing between 5 and 50%, advantageously 15 %, by weight of the grid.

9. (original) A support according to Claim 4, characterized in that the grid is unrolled directly on the fibrous support during its manufacture.

10. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that it contains a hydrophobic resin representing from 0,5 to 15% by weight of the support, chosen from the group comprising urea-formaldehyde resins, melamine-formaldehyde resins, polyamide-amine-epichlorhydrin resins, polyethyleneimine resins, starch derivatives, by themselves or as a mixture.

11. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that it contains carbon black representing from 0,5 to 4% by weight of the support.

12. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that it is coated with an aqueous solution comprising from 5 to 50% by weight of biodegradable natural latex obtained from the rubber tree, the balance to 100 % consisting of water, agents stabilizing and preserving the said latex.

13. (original) A support according to Claim 1, characterized in that it is coated with an aqueous solution comprising from 5 to 50% by weight of biodegradable prevulcanized natural latex obtained from the rubber tree, the balance to 100 % consisting of water, agents stabilizing and preserving the said latex.

14. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 12 ~~or 13~~, characterized in that the ~~(therefore biodegradable)~~ biodegradable natural latex used is obtained from Hevea Brasiliensis and has a dry rubber concentration at least of 60%.

15. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 12 ~~or 13~~, characterized in that the stabilizing agents are chosen from the group comprising the vegetable proteins

such as especially casein, soya protein, the fillers such as talc, calcium carbonate, by themselves or as a mixture.

16. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 12 ~~or 13~~, characterized in that the preservative agents are chosen from the group comprising the animal proteins such as glycerine, but also the tannins, especially that of mimosa, the natural colouring agent indigo, the chitosan, by themselves or as a mixture.

17. (currently amended) A support according to Claim ~~4~~ 12, characterized in that the coating solution contains by weight of:

from 5 to 50 % biodegradable natural latex obtained from the rubber tree,

from 1 to 20 % proteins,

from 0 to 20 % of talc,

from 1 to 20 % of chitosan, and/or indigo, and/r glycerin, and/or tannins,

the balance to 100 % consisting of water.

18. (original) Support according to Claim 1, characterized in that, before the incorporation of the biodegradable thermobonding fibres, the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

from 40 to 100% by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres;

from 0 to 60% by weight of deciduous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

19. (original) Support according to Claim 1, characterized in that, before the incorporation of the biodegradable thermobonding fibres, the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

from 80 to 100% by weight of annual plant fibres,

from 0 to 20% by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

20. (original) Support according to Claim 1, characterized in that, before the incorporation of the biodegradable thermobonding fibres, the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

from 20 to 100% by weight of coniferous bleached kraft fibres,

from 0 to 40% by weight of annual plant fibres,

from 0 to 40% by weight of rayon fibres.